

the people in Kashmir and Punjab and Jammu, India might as well be Nazi Germany."

In the words of Narinder Singh, a spokesman for the Golden Temple, the seat of the Sikh religion, who was interviewed in August 1997 by National Public Radio, "The Indian government, all the time they boast that they are secular, that they are democratic. But they have nothing to do with a democracy, nothing to do with a secularism. They just kill Sikhs to please the majority."

In the March 4 issue of *Forbes*, Steve Forbes compared India to the Austro-Hungarian Empire, arguing that as a multinational State, India is inherently unstable. Prior to the British conquest of the subcontinent, there was no political entity called India. It was a series of princely states brought together by the British.

The Kashmiri people were promised a referendum on their status in 1948, but that vote has never been held. The Sikhs, who were supposed to receive independence, have never had any of their representatives sign the Indian constitution. Instead of respecting "the glow of freedom" that Nehru and Patel promised the Sikhs, the government declared them a "criminal class" as the ink was dry on the constitution. Currently, 17 freedom movements are going on within India's borders.

Some Members of Congress have called for sanctions against India and for an end to American aid. Some have also endorsed self-determination for the peoples seeking freedom from India through a plebiscite on independence. While these events seem unlikely to occur any time soon, the Indian government has held negotiations with the freedom fighters in predominantly Christian Nagaland. Home Minister L.K. Advani recently admitted that if Kashmir achieves freedom (which now seems more likely than ever), it will cause India to break apart.

Some experts have predicted that within a decade, neither India nor Pakistan will exist in the form we know them presently. The Indian subcontinent will continue to be a region that bears close attention by American policymakers.

NURSING HOME RESIDENT SAFETY ASSURANCE ACT

HON. WALTER B. JONES

OF NORTH CAROLINA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, June 5, 2002

Mr. JONES of North Carolina. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to introduce the Nursing Home Resident Safety Assurance Act, legislation to require background checks on indirect care personnel in our nation's nursing homes.

Currently, there are 17,000 nursing homes in the United States where approximately 1.5 million of our nation's seniors reside. A 1999 study conducted by the House Government Reform Committee analyzed two years of state inspection and complaint investigation reports of nursing homes and revealed that abuse of nursing home residents is a widespread, serious problem. Specifically, over 30 percent of nursing homes in the United States, or 5,283 facilities, were cited for an abuse violation between January 1, 1999 and January 1, 2001. During the two-year period of the report, these nursing homes were cited for 8,972 violations. The most frequent violations were failure to properly investigate and report allegations of resident abuse or failure to ensure

that nursing home staff had no record of abusing, neglecting or mistreating residents. For this reason, Congress must take additional action to protect seniors receiving care in our nation's nursing homes.

My legislation, the Nursing Home Resident Safety Assurance Act is an important step towards achieving that goal. The bill would amend Public Law 105-277, which currently requires federal criminal background checks on direct care personnel to also allow background checks on indirect care personnel such as maintenance workers, janitors and dietary staff. These individuals have direct access to seniors in nursing homes without completing the screening procedures that direct care personnel, such as physical therapists and licensed nurse practitioners are required to have. The current loophole in the law puts our society's most vulnerable members, the elderly and disabled in circumstances rife with opportunities for abuse and exploitation.

The state of North Carolina recognized this potential for abuse and the state legislature passed legislation requiring criminal background checks for both direct and indirect care nursing home personnel who have not lived in North Carolina for 5 years. Public Law 105-277 hinders this background check process by preventing the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) from releasing background information on indirect care personnel.

Amending this law to require criminal background checks on all nursing home personnel would send a message that Congress is serious about protecting the welfare of our Nation's seniors. Please join me in supporting the Nursing Home Resident Safety Assurance Act, common sense legislation to protect our nation's most vulnerable citizens.

DONATION OF A PIECE OF THE BERLIN WALL

HON. BOB BARR

OF GEORGIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, June 5, 2002

Mr. BARR of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize the gift of a piece of the Berlin Wall to my good friend, Georgia State Senator Chuck Clay. The grandson of General Lucius Clay, who spearheaded the 1949 Berlin Air Lift that saved West Berlin from a Soviet invasion, and its citizens from starvation, Senator Clay is an appropriate recipient of this gift that recognizes one of our greatest military heroes. I am proud to represent the Marietta community in the United States House of Representatives.

The importance of General Clay's efforts during the Cold War cannot be overstated. After serving his country in the Second World War, he earned the Distinguished Service Medal. Later, he became commander of the U.S. armed forces in Europe, as well as the military governor of Germany. With his endeavors to make the Air Lift a success, he united the American and Berlin people in a friendship that has continued to this date. Yet even after retiring from the army, General Clay remained involved in a life of service as an advisor to President Eisenhower, an Ambassador to Berlin under President Kennedy, and as a member of countless committees on civic affairs.

I am honored to be able to assist in bringing this piece of the Berlin Wall to the Marietta community. I know that my colleagues join in recognizing its symbolic importance to German-American friendship, and will join me in hallowing the efforts of those who gave so much to make this possible.

TRIBUTE TO 2001-2002 SACRAMENTO KINGS

HON. ROBERT T. MATSUI

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, June 5, 2002

Mr. MATSUI. Mr. Speaker, I rise in tribute to the 2001-2002 Sacramento Kings, one of the most exciting and formidable teams in the National Basketball Association. The 2001-2002 Kings completed the greatest season in franchise history by taking the two-time defending World Champions, the Los Angeles Lakers, to the brink of elimination in a fiercely contested seven game series. Although the season ended short of a Championship, the 2001-2002 Kings demonstrated remarkable courage, determination, and promise that have surely made them a great source of civic pride and a perennial NBA powerhouse for years to come. I ask all of my colleagues to join with me in saluting the remarkable 2001-2002 Sacramento Kings.

Throughout the course of the season, the 2001-2002 Sacramento Kings showed tremendous character in overcoming numerous obstacles. Despite losing star players Chris Webber and Peja Stojakovic for significant portions of the season, the Kings finished the regular season with a league best mark of 61 wins and 21 losses. The Kings won the franchise's first division championship since relocating to Sacramento in 1985. By combining a high-octane offense and a tenacious defense, this year's Kings posted the best overall record, home record and road record in franchise history. It is clear that the 2001-2002 Sacramento Kings are the most successful team in the franchise's illustrious 54 year history.

The Kings began their postseason campaign in fine form, as they only needed four games to conquer their old nemesis, the Utah Jazz. In the next round, the Kings overcame significant injuries to Peredrag Stojakovic and Doug Christie to defeat a talented Dallas Mavericks team by a four games to one margin. In the Western Conference finals, the Kings locked horns with the Los Angeles Lakers in one of the most hotly contested and memorable playoff series in NBA history. Although the Kings would lose the series after stretching the ultimate seventh game into overtime, their outstanding performance throughout the playoffs cemented the Kings' status as one of the preeminent teams in the NBA today and the dominant team of the future.

The 2001-2002 Sacramento Kings are comprised of an outstanding blend of superstar players, seasoned veterans, and exciting young players. This Kings team is spearheaded by the all around excellence of All-Stars Chris Webber and Peredrag Stojakovic. On defense, the Kings are lead by defensive stalwart and All NBA Defensive Second Team member Doug Christie. Skillful big men Vlade Divac, Scot Pollard, and Lawrence